



HELP

ASK OUR TECHNICAL EXPERTS

HELPPFILE

Why am I asked for a password?

Q I recently had to reinstall Windows XP Professional Edition following a disk crash. I used to get straight to my desktop via the Welcome screen, but now I find I have to log on as Administrator and enter a password before the bootup procedure completes. As privacy is not an issue, the password is nothing more than pressing the Enter key.

Clearly I made a bad decision somewhere when reinstalling Windows XP. Is there any way I can get rid of the two-stage bootup, short of reinstalling Windows XP from scratch? I share a broadband connection with my wife using a wireless router.

Stephen Fox, mail@tsfox.f9.co.uk

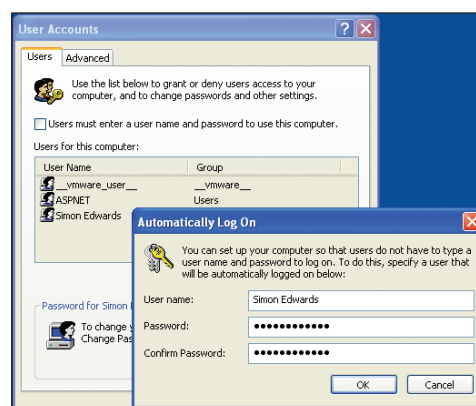
A Most Windows XP users are administrators, and the only other option in XP Home is Limited User, which is usually too limited. However there is a special account called Administrator. It is normally recommended that you don't use this account for security reasons. In fact, if any other user accounts exist, the logon option for Administrator doesn't even appear on the Welcome screen unless you have booted up in Safe Mode.

We recommend that you give the Administrator account a password. There are worms around that try to infect PCs using the combination of the username 'Administrator' and no password. In fact, if you ever want to share files across your local network with your wife's PC, we suggest that you set a password on user accounts as well. We'll shortly explain a trick to help you avoid having to enter the password manually.

To get back to the situation you used to have, create a user account with no password. Many new PCs are shipped with a factory preset account called Owner or User. Having such an account with no password is almost as dangerous as having no Administrator password. If Windows XP boots and finds that there is just one user account (apart from the default Administrator or Guest accounts) with no password, and the PC is not part of a Windows domain, it skips the Welcome screen and logs in as that user.

There is another way to avoid the Welcome screen and log in as a particular user. This works even if you define a password. In fact, it requires that you have a password, which is an advantage in itself. Set a password for the user account you create and click on Start, Run. Type Control userpasswords2, then click OK. This opens a screen similar to the old Windows 2000 password box, which is not directly available from the Windows XP Control Panel. At the top, you'll see a tick box that reads 'Users must enter a username and password to use this computer'. Untick this box and click OK. A window will open, asking you to type the default username and password. Enter the name and password you just created, and this user will always be logged on at startup. You won't be asked for it again.

If you need to access files on another computer on the local network, set up a user account on that computer with the same username and password you just entered. When you try to access a file on another computer, your computer will supply the appropriate authentication details automatically and grant you access to the file.



▲ Give your main user account a password then type Control userpasswords2 to avoid having to enter it when Windows starts up

CONTACTS

PLEASE EMAIL THE RELEVANT DEPARTMENT

helpfile@computershopper.co.uk
for all PC problems

softwarehelp@computershopper.co.uk
for help with software applications

buyinghelp@computershopper.co.uk
for advice on PC purchases

businesshelp@computershopper.co.uk
for IT solutions to business goals

YOU CAN ALSO WRITE TO US AT:

Help
Computer Shopper
30 Cleveland Street
London
W1T 4JD

Burning a bootable CD

Q I am having problems with the Ubuntu Linux Live CD included on a recent *Shopper* cover disc. I have copied the ISO image to my hard disk and written it to a CD-RW disc using Nero 5.5. Even though I have altered the boot sequence to start with the CD-ROM, the CD does not boot at startup. Have I missed something?

Geoff Denning, geoffrey.denning@lineone.net

A How did you burn the CD? When you ran Nero, did you select File, Burn Image? In the File Open dialog, you will need to select All files, as the default setting is to show only images with the file extension .nrg. Nero can handle standard ISO images, which often have names ending in .iso. When

you select the All files option, you get a Foreign Image dialog box. The default options of Data Mode 1, 2048, 0, 0 and no tick marks against the last two options should be OK. Then burn your disc as normal. Make sure Write, Finalize CD and Disc-At-Once are ticked.

Any errors during the burn process result in an unreadable CD. Some drives may try to burn too fast for some CD-RW media. Check the speed carefully and use burn protection if offered. Ubuntu images are designed for 650MB (74-minute) media, although larger media should work. Readers who do not get the DVD edition of *Shopper* can download the Ubuntu Linux ISO image from www.ubuntulinux.org.

If Nero doesn't work, look for another ISO image-burning tool at <http://iso.snoekonline.com/iso.htm>.



Driver playing up

Q I recently bought a new Advent PC system running Windows XP Media Center Edition. It has an Nvidia GeForce 6200SE TurboCache graphics card. My modem, mouse and keyboard are connected through the USB ports at the back. I am trying to run UbiSoft's SplinterCell: Pandora Tomorrow. This game ran fine to begin with but now, after about 30 seconds, the game crashes to a blue screen with the message 'DRIVER_IRQL_NOT_LESS_OR_EQUAL'. At the bottom of the screen, a message flags up USBPORT.SYS. What is causing the problem? I've tried unplugging the modem and using the Nvidia 3D games launch settings for this game, and it still crashes. Is the graphics card unable to cope?

Paul Mumby, Makkidee@aol.com

A Stop 0x0A (IRQL_NOT_LESS_OR_EQUAL) is the most annoying stop error you will ever see. The cryptic description means that something, usually a device driver, is trying to access a memory address that it does not have permission to access. This could be caused by a buggy device driver, which may or may not be the one listed in the error, or a variety of hardware faults that can corrupt memory values, making a program jump to the wrong address.

First, search the web for reports of bugs in this particular driver. USBPORT.SYS is a standard Windows XP driver and is unlikely to be causing the problem, although there may be bugs in it that can cause errors due to problems in the motherboard's chipset drivers. Then look in Device Manager for the USB controller. If

EXPERT TIP

If you have a proper Windows CD and not just a reinstallation CD, you can do a repair installation by booting from it and following the instructions.

it says it is an SiS 7001 PCI to USB Open Host Controller, for example, try changing it to Standard OpenHCI USB Host Controller. If your DSL modem has an Ethernet port as well as USB, as many newer ones do, try connecting to it through an Ethernet cable.

Next, check your memory. Bad memory can cause this fault. Microsoft supplies a free memory tester at <http://oca.microsoft.com/en/winddiag.asp>. You could also run any hardware diagnostics supplied with your PC. The error can result from many motherboard or processor faults. We have even seen it happen because the CPU was overheating.

If the memory is OK and there are no other obvious hardware problems, there could be a bug in another driver. Device drivers access system-protected memory areas and are more likely to cause this error than application programs. Check Windows Update for updated device drivers. Also check with Nvidia for updated graphics drivers, a frequent cause of errors.

Microsoft describes its recommended troubleshooting steps in the Knowledge Base article 314063 (<http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=314063>). This document mainly discusses errors that occur when you first install Windows XP and that are caused by incompatible hardware. The only useful advice it gives is to try removing or disabling different hardware devices, or use standard device drivers instead of those provided by the hardware manufacturer. In some cases, the problem can result from a bug in motherboard setup. Try an updated BIOS for your motherboard.

Finally, you should probably ask yourself what has changed since it last worked.

```
Memtest-86 v3.1 : Pass 3% #
1596Mhz : Test 7% ##
L1 Cache - Unknown : Test #3 [Moving inv. 8 bit pattern, cached]
L2 Cache - Unknown : Testing: 88K - 64M 64M
Memory 64M : Pattern: 7f7f7f7f
Chipset i440[bz]x

WallTime Cached RsudMem MemMap Cache ECC Test Pass Errors ECC Errs
0:00:00 64M 212K e820-Std on off Std 0 0 0

(ESC)exit (c)configuration (SP)scroll_lock (CR)scroll_unlock
```

◀ Use Microsoft's free Memtest utility to check your PC's physical memory

Importing from Windows Media Player to iTunes

Q We are trying to convert our music files to iTunes, but we can't highlight more than one album or folder at a time using Shift and Return with the iTunes 'Add a folder to library' option. Is there a way of transferring all the files en masse without having to highlight individually?

Clinton Everard, clintoneverard@hotmail.com

A The 'Add a folder to library' option can select just one folder at a time. However, when you select a folder it selects all the files in the

subfolders beneath, too. If all your music files are in the My Music folder, you can add your music to iTunes by selecting My Music and adding it to the library.

The trouble with this method is that iTunes isn't very clever about avoiding duplicates. So if you have already added folders to iTunes that are in My Music, you will get duplicates. To avoid this, start afresh by selecting the entire library and pressing Delete, or rearrange your music so all the songs you want to add to iTunes are in one folder and those you have already added are in another. Then one click should do it.

YOUR EXPERTS

HELPFILE

218

Paul Mullen

With 27 years of PC experience as power user, programmer and IT consultant, Paul Mullen answers all PC problems, tackling hardware, system and security issues.



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SOFTWARE HELP 224

Kay Ewbank

Database developer and productivity expert Kay Ewbank offers help with office applications.



Ben Pitt

Professional musician and photo enthusiast Ben Pitt gives advice on using creative software.



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BUYING HELP

228

Tom Royal

Labs Editor Tom Royal recommends the best products for your specific requirements.



David Ludlow

If the product you need exists, Reviews Editor David Ludlow knows where you can buy it.



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BUSINESS HELP 230

Simon Edwards

Web developer and security expert Simon Edwards provides IT solutions to your business goals.



businesshelp@computershopper.co.uk

Please contact the relevant department at the email address listed above. You can also write to us at:

Help
Computer Shopper
30 Cleveland Street
London
W1T 4JD

Please try to give full details of your problem. We need an email address or daytime and evening telephone numbers in case we need more information.

Although the policy of Computer Shopper is not to publish readers' email addresses, we include them in Help so that other readers with experience of similar problems can share their solution (please also cc any comments to the relevant Help department above). If you would prefer not to have your email address published, please say so.

Can a USB card damage a new scanner?

Q I have a six-year-old Evesham PC with Windows 98 SE, which still works without problems. I recently installed a USB2 PCI card and was hoping to use an Epson 4180 Photo scanner. When collecting this from Jessops, the salesman said some home-installed USB2 cards create a malfunction in scanners. Not wanting to waste £150, I didn't buy it. Can you tell me whether or not this is so, or recommend a course of action that will enable me to use a good-quality scanner suitable for photographs on my old PC? I have used a basic USB1.0 scanner without problems.

Derrick Sanders, derricksheila@waitrose.com

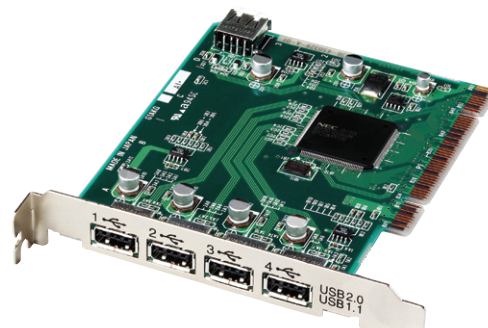
A We have never heard of such a problem. It is true that sometimes add-on USB2 cards may have driver issues or suffer from resource conflicts with the

motherboard's USB1.1 ports, and this could prevent devices being recognised, but these would not harm the hardware. In theory, a faulty USB card could damage hardware, but having it professionally installed wouldn't help matters.

The only time we have seen a user damage a USB device is when he used the wrong connector cable to connect extra USB ports to one of his motherboard's USB headers. Different motherboards, even from the same manufacturer, use different header pin arrangements. Using the wrong cable will switch round the wires in the USB interface, and that can cause damage.

You are safe to install that add-on USB2 card yourself. If you are still nervous, try connecting something cheap to it first, such as a USB mouse. If that works, it is unlikely that the port will damage other hardware. In any case, the Epson scanner will work fine when connected to a

USB1.1 port. You would notice the extra speed of the USB2 connection only when scanning images at high resolutions.



▲ You can safely install a USB2 PCI card yourself. To make sure it's working properly, connect something cheap such as a USB mouse to it first

Restricting printer use

Q I am 11 years old and would like a solution to my printing hell. I have an Epson C42 Plus, and I want to stop my sister using it to print Barbie photos. As I am buying the ink, which costs me £20 every time the black runs out, I would like to restrict printing to a few pages per day, or password-protect the printer. My operating system is Windows XP. Please get back to me soon, as I have sent off for some ink. When it comes I must hide it, as my sister will try to put it in the printer herself if I don't.

Jamie Trenchard, aliendirect@tiscali.co.uk

A Do you and your sister share one computer? If so, you could set up separate user accounts, each with its

own password. Make sure yours is an Administrator account and hers is a Limited account. You could then simply deny her access to the print queue for your printer. This wouldn't be very friendly and might lead to temper tantrums, and the danger of being beaten over the head with a Barbie doll until you submit.

If your computer were connected to your Dad's over a network, you could set up the default print queue so all your sister's print jobs went to your dad's printer. Then he could pay for the cartridges.

Many of the restrictions available in Windows XP Professional Edition do not work with Windows XP Home edition, so you can't use Group Policy Editor, for example. Schools and libraries often use print quota management

software to keep track of how many pages each user prints, so they can be charged for printing. Unfortunately, the only free tools we have found are for Linux or Unix print servers, not for Windows XP. The Windows-based solutions are usually expensive as they are designed for big companies to allocate printing costs to departments. The only cheap solution we have found is Papersaver from www.rigorini.net. This costs €29 (about £14) with a 15-day free trial, so it's less than the cost of one cartridge. Perhaps your Dad would agree to buy it, so you can show him how many pages each of you print. Then he might pay for the pages your sister prints.

Ink is a lot cheaper if you buy compatible cartridges on the web. You can buy a three-pack of black cartridges for £14 including VAT.

Converting files from a 3G phone

Q I recently bought a Nokia 6230 camera phone, which records video in 3GPP format. I have a computer with an MMC memory card reader, so I transferred some video files to my PC and tried to edit them using Windows Movie Maker in Windows XP Home Edition. It turned out that I could edit only JPEG stills; the application could not read the 3GPP format. Can you recommend any free or inexpensive programs or add-ons that would make video editing possible?

Jack Taylor, jataylor7@tiscali.co.uk

A The 3GPP and 3GPP2 formats are used to transmit video over 3G mobile phone services. They are defined by the 3G Partnership Project (www.3gpp.org). So far, only Japan and Korea have rolled out 3G extensively. The USA, which is home to many software developers, has no

fully fledged 3G networks. As such, software writers have been slow to add these new formats to their programs, and most users have to rely on third-party conversion tools.

We have a few suggestions to try. Imtoo 3GP Video converter is a shareware program available from www.imtoo.com/3gp-video-converter.html. It costs \$29 (around £16) to register. Alternatively, try WinXMedia AVI/WMV 3GP Converter, which costs \$21.95 (around £12) from www.mp3towav.org/WinXMedia-AVI-WMV-3GP-Converter. Miksoft (www.miksoft.net/products.htm) has a free Mobile 3GP Converter, but it produces uncompressed AVI files.

Another free, if more awkward, solution is a converter program called Zwei-Stein Converter. This has been discontinued but still appears on several download sites. You'll have to add 3GP codecs from www.free-codecs.com/download/QuickTime_Alternative.htm, as described by www.gromkov.com/faq/faq2004-0067.html.



▲ 3G phones use new video formats such as 3GPP that aren't yet supported by many PC-based video-editing packages

Unwanted user accounts

Q My notebook is loaded with various files from when it was used in an office environment. The main files belong to the Administrator account, but there are other files for Guest, Default User and All Users. There were other ones, which I have managed to remove, but when I try to remove the remaining few, the computer tells me that because they have a shared option I cannot remove them.

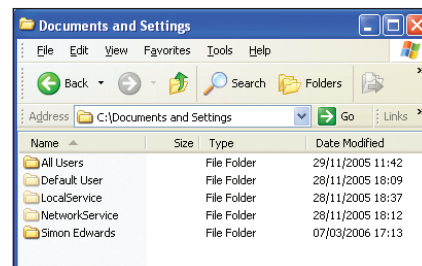
I removed most of the Guest files and switched the machine off, but the next time it booted up the files had all been put back in place. I would like to use only the Administrator files, keeping it simple and freeing up more disk space. I want to do some marine navigation and don't want an unnecessarily complicated system.

Richard Ayres, rip.ayres@virgin.net

A Windows XP has to have certain user file folders set up under Documents and Settings. These are Administrator,

All Users, Default User, LocalService and NetworkService. Windows XP Home Edition also has a built-in Guest account, an essential component of its simple file sharing. You can't delete this, even if you turn off file sharing. All Users contains the Start Menu entries and Desktop icons created when you install programs. Any item in the All Users desktop folder will appear on the desktop of every user. Similarly, if a program installer adds a program icon to the All Users Start Menu, it appears in every user's Start Menu. You can install a program for one user only if the program's installer gives you the choice.

Default User contains a template of files that are used when a new user account is created. Again, it can't be deleted safely. LocalService and NetworkService are special user accounts for running Windows services. Windows needs a separate NetworkService account to run services that don't need all the privileges of the LocalService account. As many essential services depend on them, neither should be deleted. These additional accounts don't take up much



▲ They might look messy, but those system accounts are necessary

disk space, so there's no need to delete them. It is far more important to delete unused user accounts, which may have large numbers of temporary files in their Local Settings folders.

It is not a good idea to use the account called Administrator for daily use. Doing so makes it easier for viruses and worms to attack your system. It is safer to create a separate user account that is part of the Administrators group.

My new processor is too hot

Q My computer's processor runs at 55°C when idle and gets to almost 70°C when running at full capacity. I have an Athlon XP 3000 with a Cooler Master X Dream heatsink and fan. I upgraded to the XP 3000 from an XP 2400, which ran at a maximum temperature of 55°C. My motherboard is a Gigabyte 7VAXP. The average reported internal case temperature is 50°C. Can you suggest how I might get it to run cooler? Is there a water-cooling system that I could install easily?

Phil Hingley, phillip.hingley@gmail.com

A While AMD lists a maximum operating temperature of 85°C for this processor, over 70°C does seem a little too high. The first thing to bear in mind is that the temperature sensors on motherboards are not always reliable, and Gigabyte motherboards in particular have been known to give inaccurate readings. So there may simply be a calibration issue with the sensors.

It's worrying that you report the temperature inside the case as 50°C. If that is

correct, it's much too high. The processor cooler has to transfer heat to the air inside the case, and the temperature it can maintain relates directly to the temperature of the air inside the case. If the case's cooling system is not removing heat from inside the case, the processor will run hot. You need to check that the high case temperature is accurate. What temperature does it indicate when you first turn your computer on, after it has been switched off for several hours? You can buy cheap indoor/outdoor digital thermometers from around £8 that have sensors on the end of a 2m cable. Try putting a sensor inside the case to check the reading. You may find that your motherboard's sensor is exaggerating the readings.

If the case cooling isn't removing sufficient heat, check that the existing fans are all working and not clogged with dust. Houses are dusty places compared with most offices, and some computers seem to suck in and accumulate lots of dust. Or it may be that your existing case fan simply isn't sufficient to

remove the extra heat from the faster processor. If that's the case, you'll have to add or replace a fan. If you do, make sure different fans aren't fighting each other by trying to push air in opposite directions. Your aim is a clear air flow over and around the processor and other heat-generating components.

If your processor cooler is managing to cool the processor to 20° above the case's temperature, it is doing a good job and probably doesn't need replacing. Water-cooling kits are expensive at over £100 including VAT, compared with around £25 for a good air cooler, and are needed only for overclocked systems. If you decide to get a new processor cooler, go for one with a massive 120mm fan. A large fan should be

quieter than a small one, which will run at a higher speed. There are lots of different designs from several reputable makers. Which one you choose will depend largely on whether it fits inside your system.

Zalman's range of almost-silent coolers are great. See www.overclockers.co.uk for details.

REMEMBER
The temperature inside your PC case should not exceed the room temperature by more than 15°C.

Feedback Blocking the reappearance of unwanted suspicious files

Further to John Spink's letter in *Helpfile*, March 2006, I have another way of permanently disabling any suspicious files that keep reappearing on a PC. I simply replace the file with a dummy of the same name, using:

`CD.>FILENAME.EXT`

Then I lock this in place with:

`ATTRIB +R +S FILENAME.EXT`

'CD.' does nothing and has no output, so redirecting it produces a zero-byte file. Zero-byte files occupy no disk space. I have killed a couple of instances of spyware and inoculated the machine like this.

Alan Hat, alanthecat@3mail.com

A That is a useful way to stop files reinstalling themselves, unless those files use a different, randomly generated name each time. It's not quite true that zero-length files take up no space, though.

On a FAT32 file system, they occupy a 32-byte directory entry; with NTFS, they occupy 1KB of disk space, which is the minimum size of a Master File table entry.

To identify a suspicious file, see if it has a company name in the file header. This works with .exe and .dll files. Most legitimate files contain the developer's name. To check, open Explorer, select the Details view, right-click on the column headers and choose More to add a Company column. Use the free program HijackThis! to look for startup programs.

Spyware keeps reinstalling itself

Q I am an RNIB computer volunteer and in my spare time I also help seniors and others who have computer problems. My latest unsolvable problem is this: AVG has displayed a virus warning on a system running Windows XP Professional Service Pack 1, indicating a Generic GM infection in the System 32/rdriv.sys file. It persistently self-perpetuates and can't be healed, quarantined or deleted by AVG or any other application I've found. Hours of web-based searching have revealed that it appears to be a rootkit infection. There are many requests for cures online, but no solutions. I have tried other virus checkers and anti-malware software including Ewido, all of which detect it but can't cure the problem.

The person who owns the computer is a senior and does not have any system disks, as she was given the computer second-hand to carry out secretarial duties for local clubs. So it's difficult to attempt a massive system rebuild with the prospect of a complete reinstall. I tried a trial download of F-Secure Backlight, which claims to be able to kill rootkits. However, this crashed the system on reboot and I had to resort to System Restore to recover the computer.

Trevor Reynaert, via email

A It sounds as if your client's computer may have a variant of the Spybot worm – not to be confused with Spybot Search & Destroy, which is a software tool for removing this and other spyware.

Some anti-virus sites call this worm WootBot, while others call it Agrobot. The Rdriv.sys file uses rootkit techniques to hide other components of the infection, although for some reason they don't seem to hide this file or its related entries. Several Trojans use Rdriv.sys to conceal their main components. These can be a real pain to remove, because different components protect each other, reinstalling any portions that are removed.

It could be worth running some online scans, such as those found at www.f-secure.com and <http://housecall.trendmicro.com>, to see how they identify the threat.

Fortunately, this pest does not run in Safe Mode. You should download all the tools you need, update the virus and spyware signature files and then restart the computer in Safe Mode before scanning for and removing any infected components. Make sure you detect and delete all the components. If you leave one behind, it will simply re-create the deleted entries. In addition to AVG, we suggest that you install the free anti-spyware tools Ad-Aware, Spybot Search & Destroy, Windows Defender (the new name for Microsoft AntiSpyware) and a 14-day trial version of Ewido.

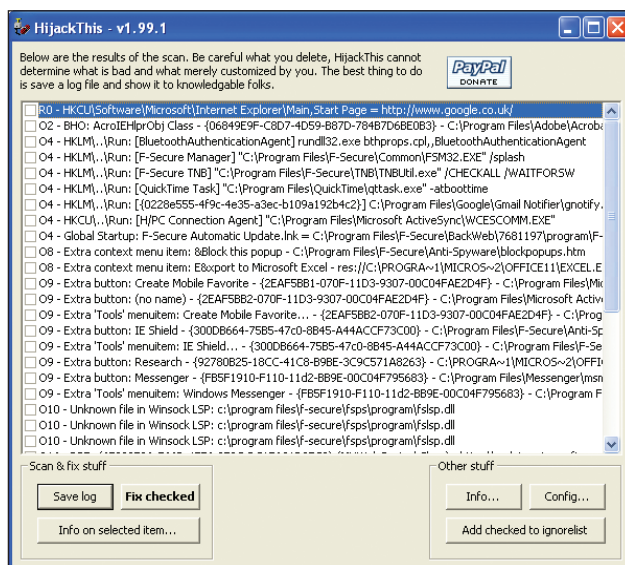
When you install each of these, make sure you download the latest updates but don't scan just yet. F-Secure has a removal tool for many variants, which you can download from www.f-secure.com/tools/f-bot.zip. Also download HijackThis from www.spywareinfo.com/~merijn and install it. Reboot and press the F8 key repeatedly until you get the menu that lets you choose to start in Safe Mode. Scan your hard disk with each program in turn, deleting whatever it identifies as a pest.

Different variants of Spybot use different file names. For example, one variant uses files rdriv, wscsvc and itunesmusic, each of which loads as

a service. Other variants use files with names that begin with _Sqlxexec or random names that start with eraseme_ and a main component called inetsvc.exe. This last one is identified in Services as Internet Service Manager.

The author of this spyware likes to change the software frequently to keep ahead of anti-spyware software, so there will probably be new filenames by the time you read this. Once you have removed everything these scanners have detected, you can run HijackThis and remove any other suspicious entries.

The Spybot worm usually gets on to a system by exploiting security weaknesses in Windows and its applications, so make sure you install all the latest Windows security patches. You should also check that you have a firewall installed, either the one included in Windows XP Service Pack 2 or a free firewall such as ZoneAlarm Basic. Once a system is infected, Spybot also changes lots of Windows security settings to enable further infections and to prevent the user installing Windows Updates. It is important that you reset all these settings. For more advice, see the Symantec virus encyclopedia (<http://securityresponse.symantec.com/avcenter>) entry on Spybot.NLX.



◀ Use HijackThis to find and remove suspicious settings from your PC

Creating many folders quickly

Q I run a small business and have 1,500 clients, each of which I have allocated a number from 1 to 1,500. I have various information, documents and spreadsheets for each client that I would like to store in individual folders named 1 to 1,500. Is there an easy way of producing 1,500 folders, or must I sit at the computer for hours and do it manually?

I also have around 1,000 CDs that are numbered, and would like to store the tracks from these in folders in the same way. I am sure there must be many scenarios where the ability to create multiple folders

would be useful, so any ideas would be gratefully received.

Martin Fletcher, felizpie@talktalk.net

A If you have Windows 2000 or XP, creating multiple folders is easy. Open a command prompt by clicking on Start, Run and typing in cmd, then clicking OK. Use the cd (change directory) command to switch to the folder in which you want to create the new folders. For example:

```
cd c:\clients\
```

Then type the following command:

```
FOR /L %a IN (1,1,1500) DO MD %a\
```

This will generate all 1,500 folders for you. The numbers inside the brackets are the start, step and finish values for the %a variable. The MD %a part is the make directory command, which is executed 1,500 times, once with each value.

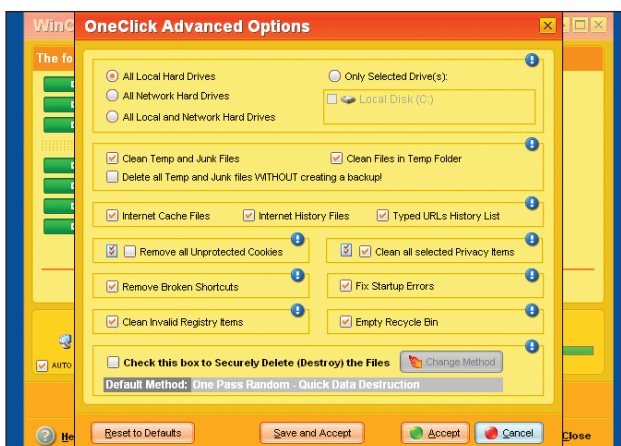
Having said that, we strongly advise against creating all 1,500 folders in a single folder. A few hundred should be OK, but file operations can get very slow when Windows Explorer tries to open a folder with more than 1,000 sub-folders in it. Instead, we suggest that you create 15 folders in your main folder, then create 100 folders inside each of those folders.

What are WCU files?

Q I have found a folder called Business Logic in the Application Data folder on my PC. This contains another folder called UWC, which contains a folder called Backup. This last folder contains 10.4GB of WCU files, whatever they are. I have temporarily transferred these files to another hard disk. What are they, and is it safe to delete them?

Alex Bennett, alex@bennett1962.fsnet.co.uk

A Business Logic is a company that develops a hard disk clean-up program called Ultra WinCleaner. The Backup folder contains copies of all the junk files it has removed, including temporary files. You'll need these only if the utility has accidentally removed a file you later find you need. We would expect the program itself to offer to delete the files – after all, what is the point of cleaning your hard disk if all it does is



◀ If you want to avoid large backup files, tick the option 'Delete all Temp and Junk files WITHOUT creating a backup!'

move the files somewhere else on the drive? To prevent this problem occurring again, tick the option to 'Delete all Temp and Junk files

WITHOUT creating a backup!'. You should never need to recover these files, so it's reasonably safe to use this setting.

Processor upgrade query

Q I have an Asus P4GE-V motherboard with an Intel 845GE chipset and 533/400MHz FSB. My processor is a Socket 478 2.4GHz Pentium 4 Northwood. I'd like to replace it with a 3.06GHz 533MHz FSB 478-pin processor but I can't find one. What would happen if I installed a 3GHz+ P4 478-pin chip with an 800MHz FSB? Would it only work at 533MHz FSB? I want to upgrade my processor without swapping the motherboard.

Nina Michaels, k@tmic.wanadoo.co.uk

A As far as we know, the only 533MHz FSB Intel processors over 3GHz in Socket 478 are Celerons. Although Asus's claim that this motherboard would "support processors of up to 3GHz and beyond" is true, you would probably rather it supported 3GHz Pentium 4.

Unfortunately, using a P4 with an 800MHz bus speed is not going to help you. Every P4 processor, with the exception of the Extreme Edition chip, has a fixed clock multiplier. The processor speed is the frontside bus (FSB) speed

multiplied by the multiplier value. Unlike Athlon processors, where you can change the multiplier by bridging links, there is no easy way around this problem, although some Abit motherboards have found a way to change the multiplier.

If you were to install a 3GHz 800MHz processor in a 533MHz motherboard, it would run at only 2GHz. Although your Asus motherboard allows you to overclock the bus speed up to 800MHz, this is on a chipset that isn't designed for speeds of more than 533MHz, and performance may be unstable.

Outlook Express still links to old ISP

Q I recently changed from Tesco Anytime Dial-up to Tiscali broadband. While I'm generally pleased with the setup, I have a couple of problems with which Tiscali appears unable to help. When I open Outlook Express, the heading says 'Outlook Express provided by Tesco.net'. A box tells me that a dial-up networking connection is already established with Tiscali broadband. There are two radio buttons labelled 'Try to locate the server on current connection' and 'Hang-up and dial Tesco.net'. If I click the first one, I get a logon box for Tesco with my old email address. If I click OK, I get an error message. If I click Cancel, I get my mail.

I've checked the Outlook Express settings against Tiscali's help page, and it all looks OK. In addition, all Internet Explorer windows are headed 'Provided by Tesco.net'. As I've cancelled my account with Tesco and set Tiscali as default, I don't understand why Tesco is involved at all. Tiscali says the problem must be with Outlook Express, and is therefore outside its remit.

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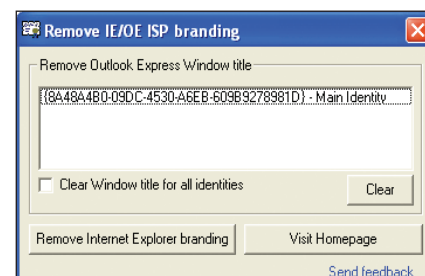
A The message 'Provided by Tesco.net' is a cosmetic issue. You probably updated Internet Explorer and Outlook Express using a CD provided by Tesco. You can remove the mention of Tesco if you wish, but this may involve editing the Registry. We are more concerned that you are getting the option to hang up and dial Tesco.net; this suggests that you haven't removed all the old dial-up settings.

In Outlook Express, select Tools, Accounts and click on the Mail tab. You will see one or more email accounts. Highlight each account in turn, click on Properties and then in the Properties window click the Connection tab. There you will see an 'Always Connect to this account using...' option. You will have at least one email account where this has been selected and set to use Tesco.net. Untick the box, and you shouldn't be bothered by the annoying error again.

There is a simple method for removing the Tesco branding from Internet Explorer and Outlook Express. Close all your applications and then click on Start and Run. In the Open box, type `rundll32 iedkcs32.dll, Clear`. Then click OK. If this does not work completely, there's a utility

available from MVPs.org at <http://windowsxp.mvps.org/ie/ispunbrand.htm>.

Those who are comfortable with editing the Registry can search the Registry for keys named WindowTitle and Windows Title. In some places it has a space and in others it doesn't. Delete each key that mentions Tesco. Do the same for the custom logo, this time deleting any entries for BrandBitmap and SmBrandBitmap. You should find these under HKey_Current_User or HKey_Local_Machine, and then Software, Microsoft, Internet Explorer, Toolbar. ☺



▲ Get rid of Internet Explorer and Outlook Express branding with this simple utility